

THE DAY AFTER NOVEMBER 4TH

Romans 13:1-7

November 2, 2008 Sunday a.m.

INTRODUCTION

- A. Part of the psychology of being a sports fan is when your team wins you feel like a winner, but the reverse can also be true.
- B. It's the same in politics.
 - 1. Wednesday morning about half of America will celebrate their candidate's win, the other half will mourn their loss.
 - 2. If you're on the winning side try not to rub it in.
 - 3. If you're on the losing side, be gracious rather than grouchy.
- C. Did you know the Bible tells us how to respond when your candidate doesn't win the election?
 - 1. In the first century, the Romans controlled the government.
 - 2. They were pagans who took delight in persecuting Christians.
 - 3. Christians couldn't vote, but even if they could, they would never have cast their ballot for the Roman party.
 - 4. It was in this political climate, however, that the Apostle Paul told Christians that God is the one who allowed the Romans to rule—**13:1b**.
..... there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.
 - 5. After the initial shock of telling Christians that, he went on to spell out how Christians should relate to their government officials, whether they voted for them or not. How?

I. FIRST, CHRISTIANS SHOULD ACKNOWLEDGE GOVERNMENT'S AUTHORITY WHETHER WE VOTED FOR THEM OR NOT.

- A. Sometimes when a person's candidate loses they may say of the other guy, "Well he's not my President, Governor, Legislator, etc." While it may be true you didn't vote for them, its not true that they are not your government official.
- B. The Bible makes this clear—13:1a & 1 Peter 2:13-15.
¹ Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities....
1 Peter 2:13-15 ¹³ Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴ or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. ¹⁵ For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.
- C. Paul doesn't mean there may never be a time we should resist government. Peter voices the exception.

Acts 5:29 Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!"

II. SECOND, WE SHOULD GIVE GOVERNMENT OUR SUPPORT WHETHER WE VOTED FOR THEM OR NOT.

- A. First, give them our "civic" support.
 - 1. Paul used the example of paying taxes.
Romans 13:6-7 ⁶ This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. ⁷ Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue.....
Matthew 22:21 (JESUS) "Caesar's," they replied. Then he said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."
 - 2. He could have used any other example of civic responsibilities---voting, obeying the law, serving on juries, etc.
- B. Second, give them our "civil" support i.e. acting civilly or kindly.

Romans 13:7 Give everyone what you owe him.... if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

1 Peter 2:17 Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.

C. Third, give them our "spiritual" support.

1 Timothy 2:1-3 ¹ I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-- ² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³ This is good, and pleases God our Savior,

CONCLUSION

A. If you are a winner next Tuesday, congratulations. Be kind.

B. If you are a loser next Tuesday remember this...

1. The church's strategy has never been to change the world through the political process.

It is to change the world by introducing them to the changing power of Jesus Christ.

2. Our task is not to overthrow the government or a political party. It is to change people from the inside out.

C. By all means vote and leave the rest up to God. He is in charge, even of our government.